



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/757,613	01/13/2004	Jerald C. Seelig	619.739	4801
21707	7590	07/28/2006	EXAMINER	
IAN F. BURNS & ASSOCIATES P.O. BOX 71115 RENO, NV 89570			COBURN, CORBETT B	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3714	

DATE MAILED: 07/28/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b>		<b>Applicant(s)</b>	
	10/757,613		SEELIG ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b>		<b>Art Unit</b>	
	Corbett B. Coburn		3714	

**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --**  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 February 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-54 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 22-54 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 13 January 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                        | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)                     |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)               | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____  |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>4/29/04, 3/16/05</u> .  | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                    |

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Election/Restrictions*

1. Applicant's election of claims 1-21 in the reply filed on 13 February 2006 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)).

### *Priority*

2. The material claimed in at least claims 17 & 18 appear to have been added in the current Application. As such it is entitled to a priority date of the date of filing of this application, to wit, 13 January 2004.

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102*

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1, 3, 5-7, 14-16 & 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Fey (*Slot Machines, A Pictorial history of the First 100 Years*).

**Claim 1:** Fey teaches the Reliance. The reliance has at least one housing and at least one display area located on the housing (i.e., the face of the machine). Around the perimeter of the display are a plurality of prize displays displaying game related indicia disposed on the display area. There is at least one animated figure (i.e., the hands make

up an animated figure) coupled to the housing. The animated figure have a first animated element (one hand) that is part of, or operatively coupled to, the animated figure. The first animated element is moveable between at least two positions. In at least one position, the first animated element indicates at least one of the plurality of prize Displays. There is a second animated element (i.e., a second hand), which is part of, or operatively coupled to the animated figure. The second animated element is movable between at least two positions.

**Claim 3:** The game related indicia displayed by the prize display indicated by the first animated element comprises a monetary award or its equivalent.

**Claim 5:** At least one position the second animated element indicates a prize display.

**Claim 6:** The prize display indicated by the second animated element comprises game related indicia.

**Claim 7:** The prize display indicated by the first animated element indicates different game related indicia than the prize display indicated by the second animated element (i.e., they may point to different game related indicia).

**Claims 14 & 15:** The animated figure represents a single object that comprises a plurality of objects. The figure can be considered the combination of hands.

**Claim 16:** The second animated element may comprise the animated figure. Each hand is an animated figure since each hand moves.

**Claim 20:** The Reliance's first animated element is animated for a time period having a duration, wherein at least a portion of the plurality of prize displays comprise game related indicia having a value, whereby the value of the game related indicia is correlated

to the duration of the time period. The reliance spins the pointers for a certain amount of time. The length of time the pointers spin determines where they stop. The position of the hands where they stop determines the prize value. Therefore, the prize value is correlated with the duration of spin.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 2, 4, 8, 9-13 & 21 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fey as applied to claim 1 or 7 above.

**Claim 2:** Fey's Reliance teaches the invention substantially as claimed, but fails to teach that the animated figure comprises a representation of all or part of an animal, a bird, a human, a human-like figure, a boat, an automobile, or a train car. Clearly, on its face, the claim indicates that the animated figure may assume any form chosen by the designer. The form of the animated figure is clearly a matter of aesthetic design choice and does not distinguish over the prior art.

**Claims 4 & 8:** Fey teaches the invention substantially as claimed, but fails to teach that the game related indicia displayed by the prize display indicated by the second animated element comprises a multiplier. Multipliers are notoriously well known to the art. Multipliers are known to attract players. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary

Art Unit: 3714

skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified Fey's Reliance to have the second animated element point to a multiplier in order to attract players.

**Claim 9:** Fey's Reliance teaches a first actuator located in the housing and coupled to the first animated element (something must spin the hands). Fey does not teach a controller located in the housing determining a game outcome, and in communication with the first actuator, wherein the first actuator moves the first animated element in response to a signal sent by the controller. Fey teaches that modern slot machines make use of controllers (i.e., computers) to determine the outcome of the game and to control movement of the game's elements. This allows game operators to have much greater control over the game. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified Fey's reliance to use a controller located in the housing determining a game outcome, and in communication with the first actuator, wherein the first actuator moves the first animated element in response to a signal sent by the controller in order to update the game to use modern technology that allows game operators to have much greater control over the game.

**Claims 10 & 12:** The Reliance teaches the invention substantially as claimed, but fails to teach that the first & second actuators are stepper motors. Stepper motors have replaced the mechanical contrivances used in the early days of the slot machine industry. Stepper motors can be controlled by microprocessors. This allows game operators to have much greater control over the game. Furthermore, stepper motors are much more reliable than the devices used in the Reliance's day. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified the Reliance to have the

actuators be stepper motors in order to take advantage of their reliability and the ability to be controlled by microprocessors.

**Claim 11:** The Reliance teaches that the first animated element is in communication with the second animated element, whereby actuation of the first animated element by the first actuator actuates the second animated element. Both hands spin at the same time.

**Claim 13:** The Reliance's hands move independently of each other – the location of one hand is not controlled by the location of the other.

**Claim 21:** The Reliance has a player input device in communication with the controller, the player input device allowing a player to provide player input, the first animated element being moved proximate a prize display according to the player input.

7. Claims 17 & 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fey as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Nordman (US Patent Number 6,712,692).

**Claim 17:** The Reliance teaches the invention substantially as claimed, but fails to teach that at least one of the prize displays comprises a plurality of rotatable sections, each section comprising at least one indicia. Nordman teaches a device that has a pointer (80) like the Reliance that points to prize displays comprises a plurality of rotatable sections, each section comprising at least one indicia. (Fig 4) Further, Nordman teaches that the pointer and the prize display may be arranged to resemble a clock. (Col 8, 36-45) Nordman teaches that this arrangement provides a fun and exciting mechanical display. (Col 1, 58-64) It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have modified the Reliance in view of Nordman to have at least one of

Art Unit: 3714

the prize displays comprise a plurality of rotatable sections, each section comprising at least one indicia in order to provides a fun and exciting mechanical display.

**Claim 18:** Nordman's Fig 5 shows the first animated element indicating a pay line comprising indicia on one or more rotatable sections.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

8. Claim 19 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

9. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: A thorough search of the prior art fails to disclose any reference or references, which, taken alone or in combination, teach or suggest, in combination with the other limitations, the value of the game related indicia is correlated to the movement rate of the first animated element.

10. While the prior art teaches the ability to change the speed of stepper motors, it does not teach correlating the speed of the stepper motors with the value of the prize.

***Conclusion***

11. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Reference Name	US Patent Number	Applicability
Kelly et al.	5,584,763	Updated version of Reliance
Demar et al.	6,315,660	Game human-figure pointer
Baerlocher et al.	6,336,863	Pointer game
Nordman	6,905,407	Game with pointers & rotating indicia



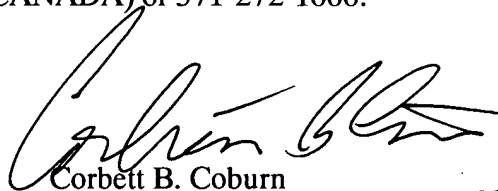
Art Unit: 3714

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Corbett B. Coburn whose telephone number is (571) 272-4447.

The examiner can normally be reached on 8-5:30, Monday-Friday, alternate Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert Olszewski can be reached on (571) 272-6788. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Corbett B. Coburn  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3714

**CORBETT B. COBURN  
PRIMARY EXAMINER**